

Geary 0.8

Email should be as simple as possible, but no simpler. Ben Everard finds out which side this new email client sits on.

DATA

Web
<https://wiki.gnome.org/Apps/Geary>
Developer
 Yorba
Licence
 LGPL

In computing terms, email is ancient. It pre-dates the web. It pre-dates the internet, and in some form, it even pre-dates Arpanet. It's become ubiquitous and something that computer users expect to 'just work' on any computer.

Linux has its fair share of email clients, from the terminal-based *Mutt* to the all-singing-all-dancing *Thunderbird*. However, what it didn't have until recently was an email client focused on ease of use. This is the niche that *Geary* is now trying to fill.

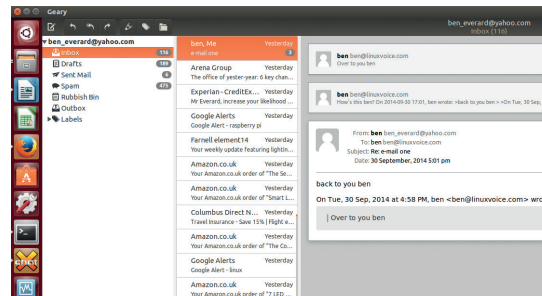
Despite failing to reach the \$100,000 target on its crowdfunding campaign (and therefore getting nothing) in April 2013, Yorba – the development team behind *Geary* – have continued to develop the software albeit at a slower pace than we would have otherwise expected. It has just reached version 0.8.

The design philosophy is probably best summed up by the preferences dialog. It contains a mere six options (all of them on/off), half of which are around notifications (the remaining three are on spellchecking, previews and moving to the next message). Want to change the frequency it checks the server? No such luck. Prefer a different font? Nope. Like to set up a filtering rule? Not here.

Simple minds

If this sounds like madness to you, then you might as well stop here – *Geary* isn't going to be for you. Yes, it will probably get more features in the future, but its whole *raison d'être* is based around its simplicity, and that's incompatible with fine-grained control.

If you're still reading, then you're probably intrigued about the possibility of a minimalist email client, so



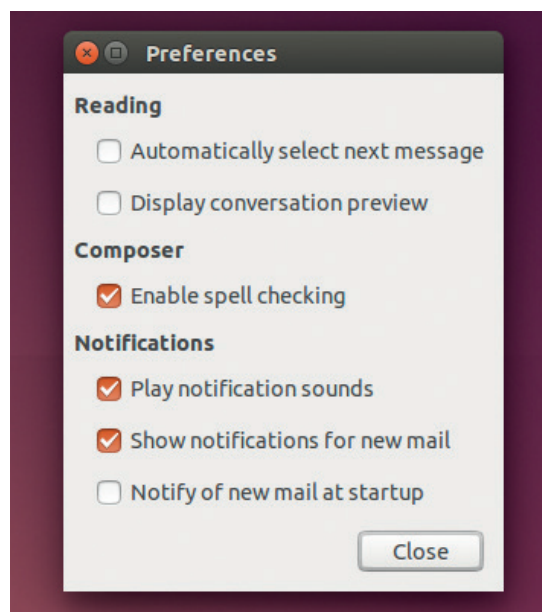
Geary's conversations view helps you follow the flow of messages, but it can get unwieldy with large emails.

let's look at the features. Well, the biggest new feature in version 0.8 is signatures. Yep, those bits of text that you add to the bottom of the email. They've only just landed in version 0.8, so that should give you an idea about the level of completeness.

Connection to an email account is easy, provided, that is, it's an account from Gmail, Outlook.com or Yahoo. If it's not, you'll have to set up the account manually using the IMAP and SMTP details. Once set up, the interface is perhaps a little closer to most webmail accounts than most standalone email clients. Everything stays in one window, including composing emails. Thanks to the new composer, replying now happens in-line with the conversation on the main pane of the window. This is great for knocking off quick answers, but again, power users might find it a bit simplistic (you can break out into another window if you wish).

The elephant in the room with *Geary* is the lack of GPG/PGP encryption support. It would, of course, be possible to do the encryption elsewhere and just paste the cypher text into the email, but if you're going to do that, why not just use a client that supports it? There is a bounty available for whoever implements encryption (www.bountysource.com/issues/1353854-transparent-encryption-and-signing-with-gpg) that's standing at \$55, but if it's a feature you'd like, you can add money to the bounty.

Ultimately, some people will love *Geary* for its simplicity, while others will hate it for its lack of options. This is the case now and will almost certainly be the case in future releases. You just have to decide which side you're on – give it a go! 🐧



The full range of configuration options for *Geary*. No, there's not much here – and that's the whole point.

LINUX VOICE VERDICT

Geary is easy to use, looks great and works well, but only if you can put up with the lack of options.

★★★★★